4th April 1953]

APPENDIX IV.

[Vide answer to starred question No. 317 asked by Sri T. Nagi Reddy (on behalf of Sri M. Kalyanasundaram) at the meeting of the Legislative Assembly held on 4th April 1953, page 854 supra.]

It is fairly well-known that since the advent of freedom, there have been a number of cases of assault, arson and hooliganism inside the French territory against persons holding pro-merger opinions. Gangs of bad characters have also crossed the border to commit offences inside Union territory, and during 1952, there were over 20 such major raids, and in some of these, the French Indian Policemen and men are reported to have taken part.

A large number of such raids across the Union territory took place during September-October 1952, particularly after the attack on Sellane Naicker inside Pondicherry. These included an attack on the Indian subjects of Pudupet village, an assault and stone throwing on the villagers of Uchimedu and an attack on Union residents, almost two miles from Cuddalore on the Cuddalore-Pondicherry road. About the same time, the villagers in the Bahour Commune were being troubled by hooligans, and as a result of which about 50 families took refuge in Union territory.

In the last four or five months, however, there has been a comparative lull in the activities of goondas, till a clash took place on 21st February 1953 when the French Indian Police trespassed into Indian territory and forcibly kidnapped a refugee, Thulasingam. During the course of the scuffle that ensued, a French Indian constable is reported to have sustained injuries and later succumbed to them. A strong protest has been lodged with the French authorities in this connexion and further action in the matter is also under the consideration of the Government.

Adequate measures have been taken all along to protect the residents of the Indian Union villages near the border. In September-October 1952, on two occasions, when our Union villagers were exposed to danger, our Police promptly arrived on the scene and chased away the raiders. Unfortunately, when these outrages take place inside French territory, this Government are unable to interfere, but victims seeking refuge in Union territory are given all the protection; it would be of interest to note that over a thousand families from Pondicherry alone have sought refuge here since 15th August 1947.